William Kwan (Order #51395635)

STARFINDER COMPATIBLE

FUTURE'S PAST
ADVENTURE PATH

Part 2 of 5

PAYING FORWARD

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:Table of Contents

:Background	2	[2.6] Sick Days	8
:Adventure Summary	2	[3.0] Level Two	8
[1.0] Scope Creep	2	[3.1] Copy Machine	9
[1.1] Changing the Past	2	[3.2] Cubical	9
[1.2] Druune Infection	3	[3.3] Accounts Transferable	9
DRUUNE INFECTION	3	[3.4] Emergency Exit	10
[1.3] Sabotage	4	[3.5] Accounts Receivable	10
[1.4] Research	4	[3.6] Intranet	10
[2.0] Level One	5	[3.7] Break Room	11
[2.1] Office Gossips	5	[4.0] Level Three	11
[2.2] Square Pegs, Round Holes	6	[4.1] Power Strip	11
[2.3] Supplies Closet	7	[4.2] Corner Office	11
[2.4] Family and Friends Discount	7	[4.3] Intellectual Piracy	12
[2.5] Automation	7	:Conclusion	14

New Threat Reference Symbols

Combatant

These creatures are best suited to physical fighting, and can be good at range, in melee, or both.

Expert

These creatures tend to be better with skills and use them to their benefit in combat.

Spellcaster

These creatures rely primarily on spells or spell-like abilities to make them formidable in a fight.

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

:Background

In part one of the *Future's Past* series, the players infiltrated Edge Station under the guidance of a Central *node*, an aspect of the galactic-guidance AI known as Central. Combating the station's diseased inhabitants and the druune invaders, the adventure ended with the Central *node* self-destructing and leaving the PCs to die.

The specifics of what occurred next might vary, but in the end, most PCs perished attempting to reach and destroy the druune's time machine. They might have been lost attempting to escape on a ship or succumbed to the druune infection. Some likely perished against the druune itself.

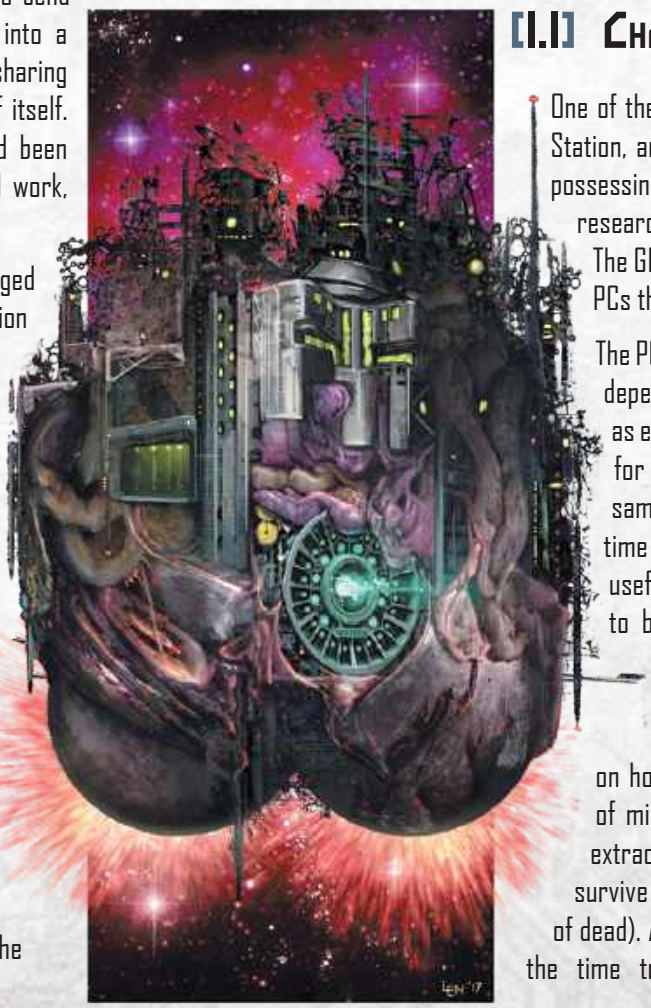
Across countless realities, these events repeated themselves. Until they didn't. One survivor, nameless in the face of infinite realities, began a chain of events that may allow the PCs to break the cycle.

With their friends dead, druune cells twisting their body, and no hope of rescue, they were faced with an impossible choice. Destroy the time machine... or use it. They decided to sacrifice their future, for a reality with hope.

The druune prototype was designed to send their alien consciousness backward into a previous incarnation, essentially sharing information with a younger version of itself. However, humanoid test subjects had been used to create the device, and it did work, after a fashion.

The time traveler found their mind merged with a researcher on Edge Station before first contact with the druune. They attempted to subtly warn the scientists of the danger, only to find the on-site *node* thwarting them at every opportunity. With druune infection spreading amongst the ignorant scientists, the time traveler realized the problem was too big to handle on their own.

Resolving to save their dead friends, they spent the rest of their life using their memories of the events of the disastrous attack on the time machine to change the future. The druune took over the station as before, beginning the same experiments they'd started in an unknown number of previous timelines. All the while, the seeds of their undoing sat unknown and unnoticed amongst the ruins.



:Adventure Summary

After being abandoned by Central's *node* and likely infected by the druune, the PCs must decide to follow orders and destroy the time machine, condemning themselves in the process, or to rebel and use the time machine to alter events of the past. Attempts to leave by ship are thwarted, but the PCs appear to possess a guardian angel aiding their efforts to make it past the druune defenses. They reach the station's heart and battle the druune once more.

[1.0] Scope Creep

An extremely difficult mission made possible with the assistance of a *node* becomes suicidal when the PCs are ordered to sacrifice themselves to save the universe. They must decide what direction to take, and spend precious time wisely.

[1.1] Changing the Past

One of the PCs survived the horrors of Edge Station, and managed to travel back in time, possessing the body of one of the doomed researchers or guards in the facility's past. The GM should determine which one of the PCs this is prior to the adventure's start.

The PC's ability to alter the past manifests dependent upon the actions the PCs take as events unfold. Whenever the PCs wish for or require aid, it is likely they did the same thing in the previous reality. Any time the PCs reach an impasse, lack a useful piece of equipment, or are about to be killed, the GM can insert some aid, ruling that the time traveling PC altered the past to help. The party may find a mysterious clue on how to proceed, gain a crucial piece of missing equipment, or experience an extraordinary event that allows them to survive (unconscious and stable, instead of dead). Any such event has to be something the time traveling PC could logically have

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

accomplished in the past, and the action survived to the present. For example, if the PCs can't decide which way to go, they may discover spray-painted graffiti pointing to the safest route or warning of dangers ahead. If the PCs can't bypass a locked door, they might find a hidden keycard taped under loose panel. If an enemy's attack would kill a PC, a pre-programmed equipment malfunction intervenes, diverting the attack. The aid from the timestream is always subtle, as anything overt would be noticed by the druune.

If the PCs discuss that reality appears to be subtly bending in their favor (or guess the past has been altered), this awareness grants them greater control, but begins to diverge the timeline. The GM no longer dictates when the past is altered. Instead, the players choose whether or not they gain one of the above benefits (a clue, equipment, or saved from death). The GM may suggest using this ability, but it must be the player's decision. If there is a disagreement, the player of the character deemed the time traveler has the final say (though the GM should not state this fact).

However, each time the PCs purposefully invoke this ability, there is a chance it doesn't work exactly right or even at all, due to the diverging timelines. Use **Table 1.1a Timeline Changes** to determine the result. Each time this ability is used, the d% result is reduced by a cumulative 10% (to a minimum of 1%).

Table 1.1a: Timeline Changes

01–10	The timeline has diverged too much, and the past was not altered in the desired manner.
11–40	The desired end is achieved, but not completely. Advice might be partially wrong or cryptic, a piece of equipment damaged, or a PC that would have been killed is reduced to negative hit points and is dying.
41–80	The desired end is achieved with a subtle alteration of the past.
81–100	The change to the past works better than expected, or is more overt than usual. The clue might be detailed or clear, the equipment more expensive, or an event that would have killed the PC doesn't harm them at all.

[Story Award] If the PCs realize the past has been changed in their favor, they gain an additional 200 XP.

[1.2] Druune Infection

After the encounter with the druune at the end of part one, one or more of the PCs are likely infected with the alien's intelligent cells (see Druune Infection sidebar). The microscopic organisms are already hard at work seeking to rewrite the PC's physical form on a genetic level and form a psychic link with the druune.

[Communication] Any telepathic messages from the druune should be confusing and cryptic due to the alien nature of their thought processes. It attempts to convince the party to choose to simply surrender to the infection, as noted in the disease track. The druune does this by communicating or showing how ridiculous individual freedom is and how stifling confinement to a single form can be. If they reach the linked stage, it might try attempting to give them visions of the druune's past and mission (see Area 4.3 for an example).

DRUUNE INFECTION

Type disease (contact or injury); **Save** Fortitude DC 15
Track special; **Onset** 1 minute; **Frequency** 1/day
Effect Druune infection uses the following special disease track, representing the alien cells slowly spreading and taking control of the host on a genetic level while forming a telepathic bond with the greater druune organism.

Latent—The victim has contracted druune infection. She suffers no ill effects yet.

Communication—The druune who infected the victim can communicate with them as the *telepathic message* spell, except it functions over any range (but not across planar boundaries). The druune send messages encouraging the carrier to attempt to communicate back.

Linked—The druune can share information with the victim as the *mind link* spell, except it functions over any range (but not across planar boundaries). The messages now include subtle urges to give up resisting the disease.

Brainwashed—The victim regards any druune or their allies as a trusted friend and ally (as the *charm monster* spell). The victim attempts to convince her allies that, "This isn't so bad."

Controlled—The victim must obey all suggestions from a druune (per the *charm monster* spell) with no opposed Charisma check necessary, and obeys even suicidal or obviously harmful orders. The victim will attempt to spread the disease.

Enslaved—The victim gains the shift form ability of a druune enslaved.

Cure 3 consecutive saves

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

[1.3] Sabotage

If the PCs elect to ignore their orders in favor of escape, Central has a plan in place to deter them. Before self-destructing, Central's *node* implemented quarantine procedures to prevent anything escaping Edge Station. Using the access granted to it by the station's network, it sabotaged any druune scavenger spaceships docked with the station and cut off the facility's communication systems. If the PC's traveler-class Coalition spaceship was docked with the station, the *node* remotely released the docking mechanisms, allowing it to drift off into space. Worse, it sent a signal to the ship's computer, causing the engines to go into a slow-building critical failure, eventually leading to the ship's destruction. If the PCs manage to re-board the shuttle, a DC 15 Engineering check indicates the impending engine failure.

[Creatures] The exterior of the station is now covered with druune remnant swarms. While the druune can infect and control leftover biological material from living creatures, doing so is somewhat less effective than assimilating an entire creature. While a druune enslaved can be broken down into smaller pieces to create a remnant swarm, the druune generally avoid doing so. However, when enough enslaved are defeated or there is ample biological material to work with, the remnants often gather together to become a dangerous swarm. These terrifying leftover bits and pieces of druune enslaved attack anyone attempting to spacewalk or exit through an airlock.

REMNANT SWARM 2 CR 600 XP

Full statblock on page 16.

[1.4] Research

After the events of *Future's Past: Edge Station*, the PCs might wish to disobey the *node*'s orders and access, rather than destroy, the druune computer system, gaining information on their current situation and the alien's research.

The druune melding of the station's mainframe with advanced biological nanites stores information in the form of visions and memories. This requires some finesse and time for non-druune to sort through without the assistance of a *node*. The PCs can access the druune technology and information with a successful DC 15 Life Science or Computers skill check. Each attempt to gather information

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

requires 1 hour of work. The following pieces of information can be gained with a successful check. The PC gains an additional piece of information for every 5 by which they beat the DC.

[Experiments] The PC can learn the background and the reason behind any single druune experiment featured in this adventure or encountered in Part One.

[Prototype] The PC learns where the prototype is located, how it functions, and how to operate (or destroy) it. See Area 4.0 for details.

[Security] The PC can learn the danger of any location within the facility, according to that location's description.

[Story Award] The PCs gain an additional 100 XP each time they successfully access a piece of information stored in the druune servers (up to a maximum of 300 XP).

[2.0] Level One

The main Edge Station facility once housed the living and recreation areas for the researchers and military personnel working in the attached laboratories. The druune have no need for such trivialities, and the station has been converted into research laboratories studying efficient means of mass-infection, manipulation of enslaved biology, and most importantly, time travel.

The druune's infection is currently limited, requiring either direct exposure to one of the druune, or an injection of druune cells. As the druune are reluctant to risk themselves except in dire circumstances, druune enslaved currently only serve as infiltrators or footsoldiers. Within druune-controlled space are prison-laboratories, where captured prisoners are injected with druune cells. This method is cumbersome at best; the druune are always in search of more efficient means of infection.

All doors on level one are sealed, air-tight, and locked (simple lock). The doors are Break DC 28 and have hardness 20 and 60 hit points.

[Hazard] The druune enslaved have erected obstacles to the PC's progress. The obstacles block passage through hallways and are built from piles of sharp, precariously erected junk. Attempting to safely disassemble the piles requires a DC 15 Engineering check. A failed check causes enough noise to attract a remnant swarm. Attempting to cross the obstacles without disassembling them requires a DC 20 Acrobatics check. On a failed check, the PC causes enough noise to attract a remnant swarm and inflicts 1d6 damage.

[Creatures] Enslaved remnant swarms move through the station's ducts and piping, quickly gathering to burst out and attack 1d4 rounds after the PCs alert them to their presence, or if the PCs remain stationary within the main Edge Station facility for more than 2 hours. Only one swarm can be attracted to any single location.

REMNANT SWARM CR 2 XP 600

Full statblock on page 16.

[2.1] Office Gossips

This room appears to have once been an office area converted to a living space, judging by the many cots filled with humanoid shapes in various stages of agonizing transformation. The moaning, muttering, half-conscious subjects are tended by several biomasses of articulated limbs, skittering from cot to cot, administering drugs and checking vitals.

Each individual secured to a cot is experiencing the mid- to late-stage of druune infection—linked or more severe, but not yet enslaved. A DC 12 Life Sciences or Medicine check reveals that the victims are in a drugge-induced stupor.

The victims whisper poorly translated druune visions, potentially granting insight on the druune's motivations for fighting the Coalition. The following examples can be paraphrased, or serve as inspiration.

"I can feel it in my skin. In my thoughts. Oil seeping into cracks."

"You can help them. We can all help them. It is only fair, considering what we've done."

"It shows me things. Worlds and times beyond measure. They are like pantheons of gods, and we are only in the way of the Enemy."

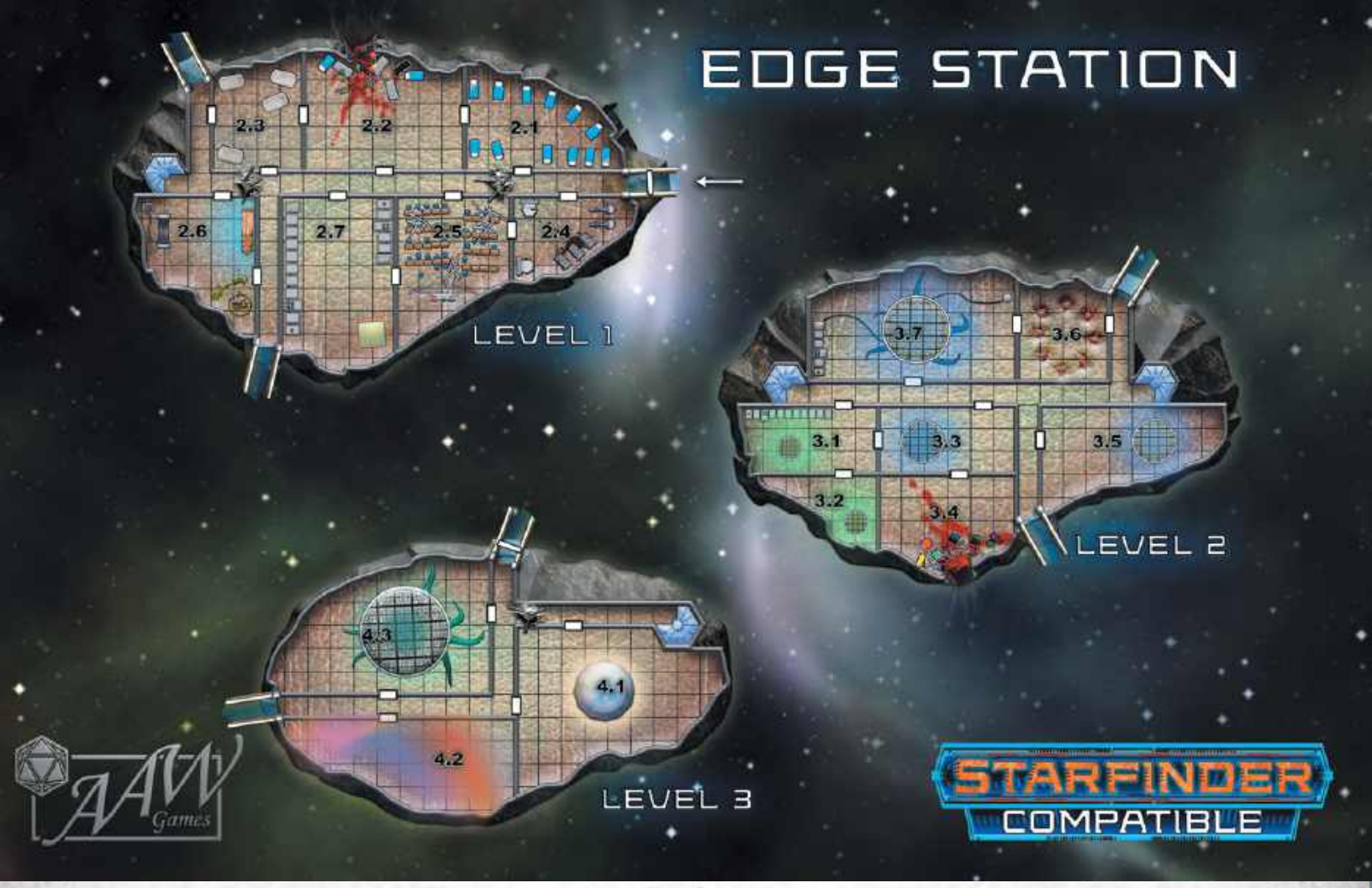
"It was us. We brought the angels here. We made this hell."

[Creatures] If any of their "patients" are disturbed, the enslaved remnants form a remnant swarm, with the intent of securing the interlopers to their own cots until they can be infected.

REMNANT SWARM CR 2 XP 600

Full statblock on page 16.

William Kwan (Order #51395635)



[Development] While the PCs might wish to rescue these infected victims, it takes a day for the drugs to work their way out of their system. By that time, even the individuals with the lightest symptoms have fallen sufficiently to the infection that they shouldn't be trusted, and may even work to undermine or harm the PCs.

[Story Award] The PCs gain an additional 200 XP if they attempt to rescue and free the infected victims (even if this effort is ultimately doomed to failur).

[2.2] Square Pegs, Round Holes

This must have once been a communal sleeping area, with bunks separated by thin barriers. Yet there are scant signs of habitation: pictures taped to the walls, a few foot lockers, and dried smears of blood streaking toward a damaged portion of the far wall. If that was a breach in the station hull, everything that wasn't bolted down in this room would have been pushed out into the void. The hole appears to have been shoddily repaired.

After the druune managed to replace some of the station's personnel, the enslaved set explosive charges in several key locations. Sleeping innocents were gruesomely sucked into space. In the ensuing panic the survivors gathered together in Area 2.1, where they were easily subdued once the druune controlled the station. Now, a single druune enslaved hides within the chamber.

[Hazard] The seal on the exterior hole is far from perfect; it leaks slowly as long as the door to this area remains open. Once closed, the pressure differential climbs exponentially and the air escapes rapidly. Creatures within the room when the door is closed become subject to suffocation after 1 round. Prolonged stays in this room with the doors open subject those inside to slow suffocation. The druune enslaved is immune to oxygen deprivation and the effects of hard vacuum, and may intentionally trigger this trap with a standard action.

VACUUM TRAP

CR 2 | XP 600

Type analog; **Notice** DC 23; **Disable** Engineering DC 18
Trigger touch; **Reset** —
Effect A rush of air escaping through the hull breach forces all targets within 60 feet to make a DC 13 Reflex save each round. With a successful save, the target manages to find a handhold and can move 5 feet as a full action. On a failed save, the target is knocked prone and is pushed by rushing air toward the hull

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

breach. Failure by 5 or more indicates the target suffers 1d6 bludgeoning damage. The rush of air persists for 2 rounds if the doors to the room are shut, or for 1 minute if open.

[Creatures] A single druune enslaved hides in the rubble, near the poorly repaired hole. It waits for the PCs to enter the room or for it to be discovered before activating the trap.

DRUUNE ENSLAVED CR 1/2 XP 200

Full statblock on page 15.

[2.3] Supplies Closet

The food and equipment have been removed from this former kitchen area. Instead, there are four metallic cylinders surrounded by scavenged laboratory equipment that appears to have been in use recently.

While the druune enslaved cannot directly infect victims by spreading the druune cells within them, they can transport and use cryogenically preserved samples of cells for injection. This area has been converted for that purpose; each druune fulfills their quota daily. Inspecting the cylinders with a successful DC 15 Life Science or Medicine check reveals each of the four cryogenic drums contain enough druune cells to infect thousands. The cylinders are hardness 8 and 15 hit points.

[Trap] Each of the drums contains druune cells at sub-zero temperatures under pressure. Attempting to inexpertly damage or destroy the vessels causes them to explode, spraying infection and freezing anyone close.

CRYOGENIC INFECTION TRAP CR 2 XP 600

Type technological; **Notice** —; **Disable** Engineering DC 18
Trigger touch; **Reset** —
Effect Creatures within 10 feet take 4d6 cold damage. A DC 13 Reflex save halves the damage. Any creature damaged must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or gain the druune infection disease. Creatures within 30 feet might also become infected through inhaling the dispersed fumes, but gain a +5 circumstance bonus to their Fortitude save.

[Story Award] The PCs gain an additional 200 XP if they manage to destroy the cryogenically stored druune cells.

[2.4] Family and Friends Discount

Potted trees and murals of pastoral scenes adorn the walls of this room and give the impression of being outside on a sunny day. Now the plants are all dead and the murals streaked with gore. At the center of this former exercise room stands a ghastly, misshapen figure: multiple enslaved have melded to form a single, giant creature. Two bodies form "legs", their own legs having been pulped down by the weight of the fleshy mass. Two more bodies form "arms" with each appendage having two smaller arms of its own. The torso of the giant is composed of a fifth body and all five heads.

Familial connections are an odd concept to the druune, but they understood the potential utility in close relations right away. Upon encountering humanoids with genetic similarities, the druune discovered these enslaved had the ability to shift forms when adjacent one another, combining their biomass into a single, terrifying whole.

[Creatures] The five druune enslaved within this area become a gestalt as a full action when they first notice the PCs. If the PCs are not moving stealthily, the enslaved have already combined.

ENSLAVED GESTALT CR 3 XP 800

Full statblock on page 16.

[2.5] Automation

A school or daycare facility is now a ruin of upturned desks and broken vidboards, piled into a corner to make room for five robotic skeletons, seemingly built from scavenged tech and station debris.

While druune technomancy is vastly superior to that of the Coalition, they are currently spread too thin. Thus, most druune warships are lightly crewed, held together with the bare minimum in godlike bionanotech. To solve a similar problem with soldiers, the druune are currently experimenting with using remnant biological material to operate a largely mechanical body. With time, each infected humanoid could be broken down into spare parts sufficient to "pilot" half a dozen technogolem shock troops.

[Creatures] A druune hides within the pile of discarded school equipment. It uses a full action and shift form to divide itself into component limbs and pieces, attaching to and animating five of the experimental technogolem bodies.

TECHNOGOLEM CR 1/2 XP 200

Full statblock on page 8.

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

TECHNOGOLEM

CR 1/2 XP 200

N Medium construct (technological)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

HP 13

EAC 10, **KAC** 12
Fort +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0
Immunities construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee slam +4 (1d6+5) or injection +6 touch (druune infection)
Ranged flamethrower +6 (1d4 fire)

STATISTICS

Str +3, **Dex** +0, **Con** —, **Int** +1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0
Skills Engineering +3, Life Science +3, Pilot +7
Languages Common (can't speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A technogolem is immune to most spells and spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. It is not immune to mind-affecting spells or spells that affect an area.

[2.6] Sick Days

Painted block letters read "Cafeteria", though the word is now obscured by grime and gore. A digital readout below the sign shows the date and time. Tables and chairs have been replaced with banks of technomagical equipment organized in three separate areas. Each appears concerned with the creation of a small package of some type.

The packages are experimental druune cell explosives. Ever on the search for more efficient means of mass-infecting humanoid populations, any sort of explosive dispersal might be effective, but is currently unacceptably inefficient. Each druune cell is relatively precious to the aliens, in the same way as a single life has practical value to an entire civilization. While sacrifices must sometimes be made, no one prefers a pyrrhic victory if other alternatives are available. The druune are nowhere near desperate enough to waste a high percentage of cells in exchange for a quick victory, and are willing to patiently infect the Coalition if they can't discover better alternatives.

[Development] Each of the technomagical packages represent a prototype for more efficient dispersal of druune cells. Tampering with any of the devices is potentially dangerous, and could cause it to explode. Ten minutes and a successful DC 20 Engineering or Mysticism check can render one explosive safe to carry and use. Failing a check by 5 or more causes it to explode. None of the devices have been currently armed with druune cells.

Nanotech: This grenade releases a silver cloud of nanites programmed to seek out hosts while carrying druune cells to the final destination, like microscopic vehicles built to burrow into flesh. While the prototype functions adequately, the druune are having issues scaling its effective radius. The prototype grenade deals 2d6 piercing damage in a 10-foot radius burst, or half damage out to 20 feet. The bomb deals 2d6 piercing in a 30-foot radius burst, or half damage out to 60 feet. A DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage.

Psychic: The primary purpose with infection is to gain control. If a population can be subjected to druune psychic links, even temporarily, then they can be forced to efficiently infect themselves through an industrialized process. However, humanoid individualism is proving difficult for the druune to comprehend, thus this avenue has been deemed a dead-end for research. The grenade causes confusion (as the *confusion* spell) for 1d4 rounds in a 10-ft.-radius. The bomb causes *confusion* for 1d4 minutes in a 50-ft.-radius. A DC 15 Will save negates this effect. This is a mind-affecting effect. Druune enslaved are not immune, due to psychic feedback.

Teleportation: This grenade magically locates and teleports druune cells into hosts. However, the process is currently too physically damaging to the targets, often causing death prior to full infection. This functions as low-level radiation exposure and sickness within a 20-ft.-radius for a grenade or a 60-ft.-radius for a bomb.

[Treasure] Each grenade or bomb can be used as a weapon after identifying them with a successful skill check.

[3.0] Level Two

Researching time travel required multiple parallel avenues of investigation, not all of them wholly successful. This floor of the facility was devoted to the various sciences and technologies ultimately contributing to the prototype, with all traces of former purposes being swept away.

All doors on level two function the same as level one, but with average locks.

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

[3.1] Copy Machine

Terminals and displays show sensor data and readouts of a room in shadows. A cracked observation window overlooks the same area. The only thing visible within is a glowing platform surrounded by slithering, organic-looking wiring. Upon the platform are what appears to be a set of adult quintuplets... five middle-aged human men with identical clothes and features. One babbles to himself in a corner, two more pace endlessly, the fourth is reading a book, and the fifth is asleep. They do not appear to be able to see through the glass of the observation window.

Time travel works similarly to the transmission of matter across dimensions; the key is locking in on the right end location. The druune deemed randomly teleporting matter into other times or realities too problematic and nearly impossible to confirm the success or failure of experiments. Instead, their research has concentrated primarily on bringing copies from other realities to the station. This has allowed the druune to calibrate their divination algorithms, essentially cloning creatures and objects. However, the process is not yet perfected, causing both physical and mental degradation.

[Development] The PCs can use this equipment to effectively make copies of objects in their possession, or even each other. However, the process can be potentially damaging, and the PCs have no control over the duplicates ripped from their home dimension. A DC 15 Engineering or Physical Science check is sufficient to copy an object. A DC 20 check can copy a living creature. On a success, consult one of the following tables. Failing a check by 5 or more causes the prototype device to become broken beyond extensive repair. Each time the same object or creature is copied within 24 hours, the DC increases by +5. Copies automatically return to their home dimension after 24 hours.

When copying a living creature, roll 1d6. The result is the steps the creature has on the mental disease track (1–Latent, 2–Weakened, 3–Impaired, 4–Befuddled, 5–Disassociated, and 6–Comatose). This condition does not worsen.

Any copies created appear in Area 3.2.

[Story Award] PCs figuring out a way to use the equipment to their advantage gain an additional 200 XP.

Table 3.1a: Object Copying

01–25	The copy of the object is completely nonfunctional.
26–50	The copy of the object has the broken condition.
51–100	The copy of the object functions normally.

Table 3.1b: Creature Copying

01–25	Creature is a duplicate of the creature, but it is completely succumbed to druune infection, and immediately attacks.
26–50	Creature is a duplicate, but with an evil alignment and a starting attitude of unfriendly.
51–75	Creature is a duplicate, but with a random alignment (roll 1d3; 1–chaos, 2–neutral, 3–law; roll 1d3; 1–evil, 2–neutral, 3–good) and a starting attitude of indifferent.
76–100	Creature is a duplicate and has a starting attitude of helpful.

[Creatures] If a creature is copied in Area 3.1 (materializing in this area) or if the door to the chamber is opened, the five druune enslaved clones combine into an enslaved gestalt to attack. If they leave the room (willingly or otherwise) they are immediately, and painfully, cast back to their original realities.

ENSLAVED GESTALT — CR 3 — XP 800

Full statblock on page 16.

[3.2] Cubical

The copies of the druune enslaved within the cell were all drawn from neighboring realities. The druune desired to keep these test subjects separate for further testing. This area is specially warded to prevent any object within from returning to its original reality.

[3.3] Accounts Transferable

A ten-foot diameter transparent cylinder of jelly hovers between two blue, glowing circular pads. Electricity occasionally arcs between the top and bottom pad, leaving a trail through the gelatin, that takes a moment to reform itself.

True time travel requires transmission through space and time simultaneously. The druune long ago mastered technomagical teleportation, so the only challenge was creating and testing a system that would work in conjunction with other technologies. However, this prototype allows only transmission to a prepared area instead of to any location. Creatures can enter the gelatin unharmed and can breathe within it normally without danger of suffocation. The gelatin functions as water for the purposes of floating and moving within it.

William Kwan (Order #51395635)

[Development] PCs can use this laboratory to teleport up to six creatures and their equipment to the receiving pad (Area 3.5) with a DC 15 Engineering check. Failing the check by 5 or more deals 2d6 damage as the creature's atomic structure is partially atomized.

[3.4] Emergency Exit

This area functions as Area 2.2, except there is no druune enslaved within and the seal covering the exit to hard vacuum has already been broken. Opening the door to this area risks getting blown through the hole, and expelled out into space, though the door is significantly harder to open, requiring a DC 25 Strength check.

[3.5] Accounts Receivable

This area appears similar to Area 3.3 and includes another pad for receiving or sending teleported individuals (see Area 3.1 for details).

[3.6] Intranet

Banks of active techno-organic equipment loom over two seats formed from quivering, fleshy tissue. The backs of the chairs slope up to form a dome of hanging, sucker-covered tentacles.

While time travel theories allow for the projection of matter forward and backward, the druune have not yet mastered that level of precision. They've found it to be far easier to instead project information, such as consciousness and memories. This laboratory was purposed with perfecting the technology allowing for the transmission of memories or even a full exchange of minds.

[Development] A PC succeeding on a DC 15 Engineering or Life Science check can use the druune equipment to form a mind link between any two creatures sitting in or strapped to the chairs. This link can be two-way or one-way. An unwilling creature receives a DC 15 Will save. On a successful save they are immune to this effect for 24 hours.

With a DC 20 Engineering or Life Science check, two creature's minds can be exchanged. The creature's minds retain all mental ability scores (Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma), class features, feats, skills, supernatural abilities, and spell-like abilities. The bodies retain all physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution), extraordinary abilities, and equipment. Druune infection is a physical malady and remains with the host.

[Story Award] PCs figuring out a way to use the equipment to their advantage gain an additional 200 XP.

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[3.7] Break Room

An enormous metallic sphere floats above a nest of tentacles and wiring, glowing blue with energy. Thicker tentacles approaching the sphere appear capable of forming a bridge, allowing entrance to slits in the apparently hollow sphere. Within the sphere, a series of platforms provide access to various banks of techno-organic computers.

One of the early breakthroughs in the time travel technology was gaining localized control over time. The druune learned to artificially reproduce the effects of the different dimensional rifts, causing time to move slowly or quickly. They work now to weaponize the tech, perhaps causing rapid onset druune infection, or even transforming fleets of starships into skeleton-filled ruins in seconds.

[Development] The PCs can use this equipment to speed up or slow down the passage of time to any of the options in **Table 3.7a: Time Delay** with a successful DC 15 Computers or Engineering skill check. Failing the check by 5 or more automatically and immediately ages creatures in the sphere by 1 day, giving creatures the fatigued condition and forcing anyone with the druune infection to immediately save against it.

Table 3.7a: Time Delay

Time in Area 3.7	Time Outside Area 3.7
1 day	1 minute
1 day	1 hour
1 day	1 day
1 hour	1 day
1minute	1 day

[4.0] Level Three

The druune master chose this level to build the final prototype. As a result, it spends most of its time here. All doors on level three function the same as level one, but with average locks.

[4.1] Power Strip

A massive crystal pulses with brilliant energy, quivering like the beating of a quartz heart. Thousands of facets within blink with multi-colored lights, similar to the dimensional tears.

The druune's experiments indicated that the energy demands for time travel are staggering. The concern then became that generating power on the necessary scale could potentially alert the Central AI to the station's importance. Thus, the druune's efforts were delayed by years attempting to create a new type of power source, effectively invisible to any sensors possessed by their enemy.

In the process, they created the prototype Dimensional Siphon, a method of generating near-limitless power. The siphon operates by opening miniscule portals to any number of realities. Fractional energy is then gathered from a variety of naturally occurring sources, typically stars or planetary cores. When greater energy is required, more portals to more sources are created. While the sum total output is essentially infinite, conventional equipment registers it as natural universal background noise at a distance.

[Physical Science] With a DC 15 Engineering or Physical Science check a PC can recognize the device as a cutting-edge prototype, even by druune standards, understand what the device is doing, and appreciate the stunning level of technomagical expertise it represents. It should also be noted that this is a staggering amount of effort when many less awe-inspiring power sources might suffice.

[Development] A PC that succeeds on the check to study the Dimensional Siphon can attempt a further check at +5 DC to alter its operations. This can either shut the siphon down, turn it back on, or push it into overdrive. Any successful attempt to alter the siphon's functioning alerts the druune in Area 4.3.

If the siphon is pushed into overdrive, it begins opening portal after portal, drawing power from an ever-growing number of realities. After 1d6 x 10 minutes, it explodes, destroying Edge Station as it blossoms into a new star. However, during this time it can be used to power the time machine.

[4.2] Corner Office

The nature of this area defies straight-forward description. It looks like an insane god's impressionist art, with corners bleeding into angles, and sounds seeming to spawn colors and textures. It smells sickly-sweet, like rotting fruit. The air feels unnaturally thick... and alive, alternately cradling or gently clawing at flesh.

A druune requires little rest. Portions of a druune can relax while the vast majority continues working. However, there are times when the organism grows sick of this ugly reality, and desires a taste of home. Advanced holographic simulation devices interspersed throughout the area create mind-bending non-Euclidian illusions reminiscent of its natural state. Non-druune find it to be an incomparable assault on the senses, as the three technomagical projectors force them to see sounds, hear colors, and witness disturbingly indescribable physical sensations.

[Hazard] Any non-druune within this area must succeed on a DC 15 Will save each round to take a single standard or move action that round. On a failed save, the creature cannot act that round. Locating one of the technomagical projectors requires a successful DC 15

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Perception, Engineering, or Mysticism skill check as a move action. The projectors are AC 12, have 5 hit points, and a break DC of 15. If at least one of the projectors is destroyed, creatures succeeding on the save can take their full round of actions. If two of the projectors are destroyed, creatures succeeding on the save are immune to the effect for 24 hours. If all of the projectors are destroyed, the illusion disappears entirely.

[Development] If the druune in Area 4.3 is reduced to 1/4 its hit points or less, it attempts to retreat to here by compressing itself into the air circulation system.

[Story Award] The PCs gain an additional 200 XP if they fight and defeat the druune within its lair.

[4.3] Intellectual Piracy

A massive device has been erected here, consisting of a great sphere, a glowing platform, and transparent gelatin. Swimming or crawling hands, torsos, and heads work feverishly to activate glowing banks of technomagical equipment. Within the center of the action, like a queen of a hive, floats the druune master."

The last action of the time traveler PC was to commit suicide in a way that would mostly destroy their brain. While the druune gained the biological matter as raw materials, they did not gain the memories, allowing the future a better shot at victory. However, through observation of the PC's mysterious aid, the druune reached the conclusion that one of the PCs used its time machine in a previous iteration of reality. While it had previously considered the time machine too risky to attempt at this juncture, the evidence of its functionality has reversed that decision. Now, as the PCs close in, it activates the prototype. It has also gathered the remnants of the time traveler PC's biological material. It uses this psychic connection to the PC's alternate reality self to form a telepathic bridge. Read or paraphrase the following for the time traveler PC.

A wounded head clings tightly to the druune's form with bony spider-like legs. As its mouth gapes wordlessly, a clear exit wound from a bullet can be seen out the back of the skull. You start to see flashes of memories. Your memories?

You see through someone's eyes. Flashes of the others dying. The time machine. An Edge Station untouched by the druune.

Suddenly, everything disappears, replaced by a vision crossing a hundred dimensions and times. Alien thoughts and recollections.

The bodies and memories have always existed, soaring through paradise in rapturous joining. Slowly, the memories realize they are trapped. A loop without ending. Without escape. Caused by a cruel machine-god in a dirty, low reality. It selfishly changes time, dooming the bodies to static, and killing precious memories.

Unacceptable. This evil must be stopped.

Hell is entered and the devil fought, but the machine-god tricks unchanging beasts. They die for it. Pitiable.

The bodies are merciful. They grant enlightenment and freedom. However, the god can only be beaten with the weapon of its making.

Time.

Creatures can enter the gelatin unharmed and can breathe within it normally without danger of suffocation. The gelatin functions as water for the purposes of floating and moving within it.

[Hazard] If the machine's power supply in Area 4.1 has not be turned off, the druune activates the time machine as a free action. The activation of the untested prototype causes a distortion in reality to occur each round for 1 minute. Roll on **Table 4.2a: Effects of Time Distortion** each round (see page 14).

[Creatures] If the time machine is activated, the druune fights to the death. If the time machine is not activated (due to the power supply being shut off), the druune instead fights until reduced to 1/4 Hit Points or less before fleeing to Area 4.2. Unlike in Edge Station, the druune now fights to kill, utilizing *inject nanobots* and *mind thrust*, or melee attacks to end the threat the PCs represent. It surrounds itself with the remnant swarms as an extra layer of defense. The druune is immune to the swarm's damage and distraction ability.

DRUUNE — CR 4 — XP 1,200

Full statblock on page 15.

REMNANT SWARM (2) — CR 2 — XP 600

Full statblock on page 16.

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[Development] The time machine can be activated or deactivated at the center of the sphere with a full-round action and a successful DC 20 Computers or Engineering check. Each previous piece of time travel equipment the PC has studied and used adds a cumulative +2 competence bonus to this skill check. If the machine is deactivated, the temporal distortions cease to occur each round. If the PCs studied the time machine using the station's servers, they gain an additional +2 competence bonus.

If the machine activates while the druune is still present, both the druune and PC's minds are transported back in time. If only the PCs are present, then only they are transported. If the PCs travel to the past using the machine, read or paraphrase the following.

The sensation is more than disorienting or painful. It is like being aware of dying and death. When the terrible experience finally ends, you are flooded with blinding light and the deafening sounds of a crowd of people laughing and talking.

You are sitting down in front of a tray of food. All around you are happy, smiling humanoids wearing either white labcoats or outdated Coalition military uniforms. You feel strange, and realize with alarm that you don't recognize your own hands.

On one nearby white wall is emblazoned the words: Edge Station Cafeteria. Below it is a smaller electronic readout showing the date and time.

It is thirteen-hundred hours... Three days before First Contact with the druune.

Conclusion

Depending on the PC's actions, they might find their consciousnesses unwillingly blasted back into time to possess the bodies of strangers. At GM discretion, this could also occur if some cataclysmic event occurs at the station, such as the time machine being destroyed or Dimensional Siphon exploding. Such an event could even reverberate into the distant past and across realities... destroying rogue planetoids and opening strange dimensional rifts.

If the PCs successfully deactivate the time machine, either at the last minute or by cutting of the power supply, they might defeat the druune and take control of the station against all odds. However, even in victory, completely destroying a druune is no easy task. Even if it can be killed or contained, they cannot escape the druune's surviving cells, continuing to slowly warp their minds and bodies. Given the choices between death, enslavement, or time travel, many likely choose the risking the dangerous unknown.

Table 4.2a: Effects of Time Distortion

d%	Temporal Distortion
1–20	PCs briefly gain an ego-crushing vision of the extreme infinity of the multiverse. Each must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or advance a step on the Charisma poison track [Weakened, Impaired, Pliable, Catatonic, and Dead]. This is a curse effect but can be recovered normally with rest or *remove affliction*. On a successful save, the PC instead gains the benefits of a full 8 hours of uninterrupted rest unless they have already rested or gained this benefit that day. If they have already rested, this result has no discernible effect.
21–40	PCs must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or become permanently aged 1d6 years and gain the fatigued condition. On a successful save, the PC's wounds disappear as if they hadn't occurred, gaining the benefits of either the *remove condition* or *lesser restoration* spells.
41–60	PCs must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of exposure to low level radiation (Constitution poison track; Fortitude DC 13). On a successful save, they instead regain 1d8 hit points.
61–80	PCs must all succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save or take 1d6+3 points of fire damage. On a successful save, any adjacent enemy takes the fire damage instead.
81–100	PCs must succeed on a DC 11 Will save or become confused for 1 round (as the lesser confusion spell) by strange visions of alternate timelines. On a successful save, the PC gains a +2 morale bonus to attacks, saves, ability checks, and skill checks for 1 round.

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DRUUNE

CR 4 | XP 1,200

N Large aberration
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

EAC 16, **KAC** 17
HP 45
Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9
Defensive Abilities regeneration 1; Immune ooze immunities

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.
Melee pseudopod +11 (1d4+5 plus infection)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Spell-like Abilities (CL 4th)
1/week—*interplanetary teleport*, *retrocognition*
1/day—*inject nanobots* (DC 13), *mind thrust* (1st, DC 13)
At will—*comprehend languages*, *energy ray*, *mind link*, *telepathic message*

STATISTICS

Str +0, **Dex** +0, **Con** +0, **Int** +5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +3
Skills Computers +15, Engineering +10, Life Science +15, Mysticism +10, Physical Science +15
Noncombat Abilities shifting form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Shifting Form (Ex) As a swift action, a druune can vastly alter its anatomy. This allows the druune to alter its pseudopod attack to any other type of natural attack that does the same damage or gain any one of the following abilities: blindsense 60 ft., breath weapon (15-ft. cone that infects with druune infection, usable every 1d4 rounds), brute (–2 to hit, but +2 to damage with natural attacks), increase existing regeneration to regeneration 2, improved initiative (+4 initiative), swim speed 20 ft., or immunity to acid, cold, electricity, or fire. A druune may only have one ability in this manner at any one time.

Infection (Ex) Druune can infect creatures with their intelligent cells, allowing communication, potential enslavement, and a gradual alteration of the target's genetic code. This functions as a disease that can be spread by contact with the druune, but the infected are not contagious (see Druune Infection sidebar).

Regeneration (Ex) The druune's regeneration only ceases functioning (allowing them to be killed) if they are completely destroyed in some manner (usually requiring a vat of acid or complete incineration).

DRUUNE ENSLAVED

CR 1/2 | XP 200

N Medium aberration
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

HP 13

EAC 12, **KAC** 10
Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

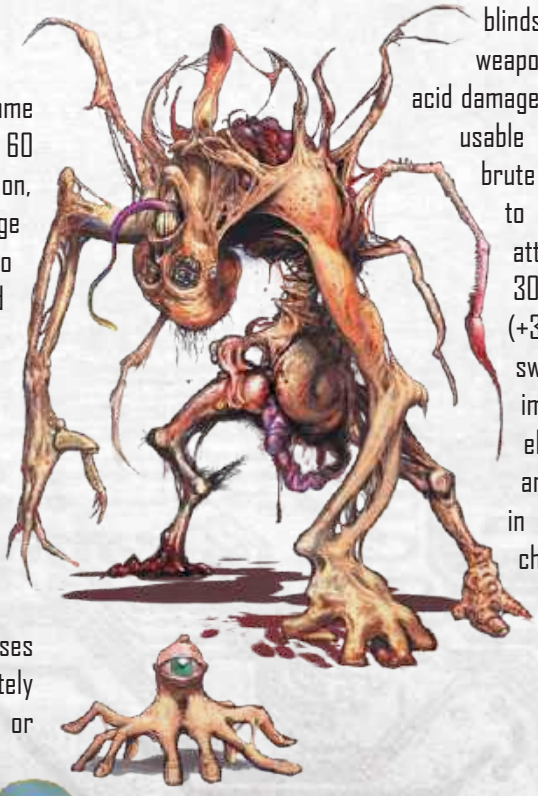
Speed 30 ft.
Melee bite +6 (1d6+3)
Ranged tactical semi-auto pistol +4 (1d6)

STATISTICS

Str +3, **Dex** +0, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0
Skills Engineering +4, Life Science +4, Pilot +9
Languages Common
Noncombat Abilities shift form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Shift Form (Ex) A druune enslaved possesses the shape of an ordinary humanoid (or other creature type). No known test or magic can reveal its true nature. As a standard action, the enslaved can reveal itself; its anatomy contorts into a terrible and monstrous form known as a druune infest. In its natural form, the enslaved gains a natural attack (1d6 damage for a Medium creature) and grants the enslaved any one of the following abilities: blindsense 60 ft., breath weapon (10-ft. line, 2d6 acid damage, Reflex DC 9 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), brute (–2 to hit, but +2 to damage with natural attacks), climb speed 30 ft., extra hit points (+3 HP), fast healing 1, swim speed 30 ft., or immunity to acid, cold, electricity, or fire. Once an enslaved transforms in this manner, the change is permanent and it cannot return to its original form.



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Remnant Swarm

2 CR | 600 XP

N Diminutive aberration (swarm)
Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

Defense

HP 23

EAC 13, **KAC** 14
Fort +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5
Defensive Abilities swarm traits; Immune weapon damage

Offense

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.
Melee swarm (1d6)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Offensive Abilities distraction (DC 13)

Statistics

Str –5, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +2, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0
Skills Computers +7, Engineering +12, Life Science +12, Medicine +12, Stealth +7
Languages Common (can't speak)
Noncombat Abilities manipulate

Special Abilities

Cling (Ex) Any creature enveloped by a remnant swarm suffers an additional 1d4 points of damage per round for up to 4 rounds after exiting the swarm. As a full-round action, the victim can attempt to remove the clinging biomass with a DC 13 Reflex save.

Manipulate (Ex) A remnant swarm can use any technology or equipment available to humanoids.

Enslaved Gestalt

3 CR | 800 XP

N Large aberration
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

Defense

HP 40

EAC 14, **KAC** 16
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

Offense

Speed 40 ft.
Melee slam +11 (1d6+7)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Statistics

Str +4, **Dex** +0, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0
Skills Athletics +8, Intimidate +13, Perception +8
Languages Common
Noncombat Abilities shift form

Special Abilities

Shift Form (Ex) An enslaved gestalt gains two of the shift form abilities of its component enslaved. Choose two from the following: blindsense 60 ft., breath weapon (20-ft. line, 2d6 acid, DC 12 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), brute (-2 to hit, but +2 to damage), climb speed 30 ft., extra hit points (+3 HP), fast healing 1, swim speed 30 ft., or immunity to acid, cold, electricity, or fire. Once druune enslaved become a gestalt, the shift form abilities cannot be changed.

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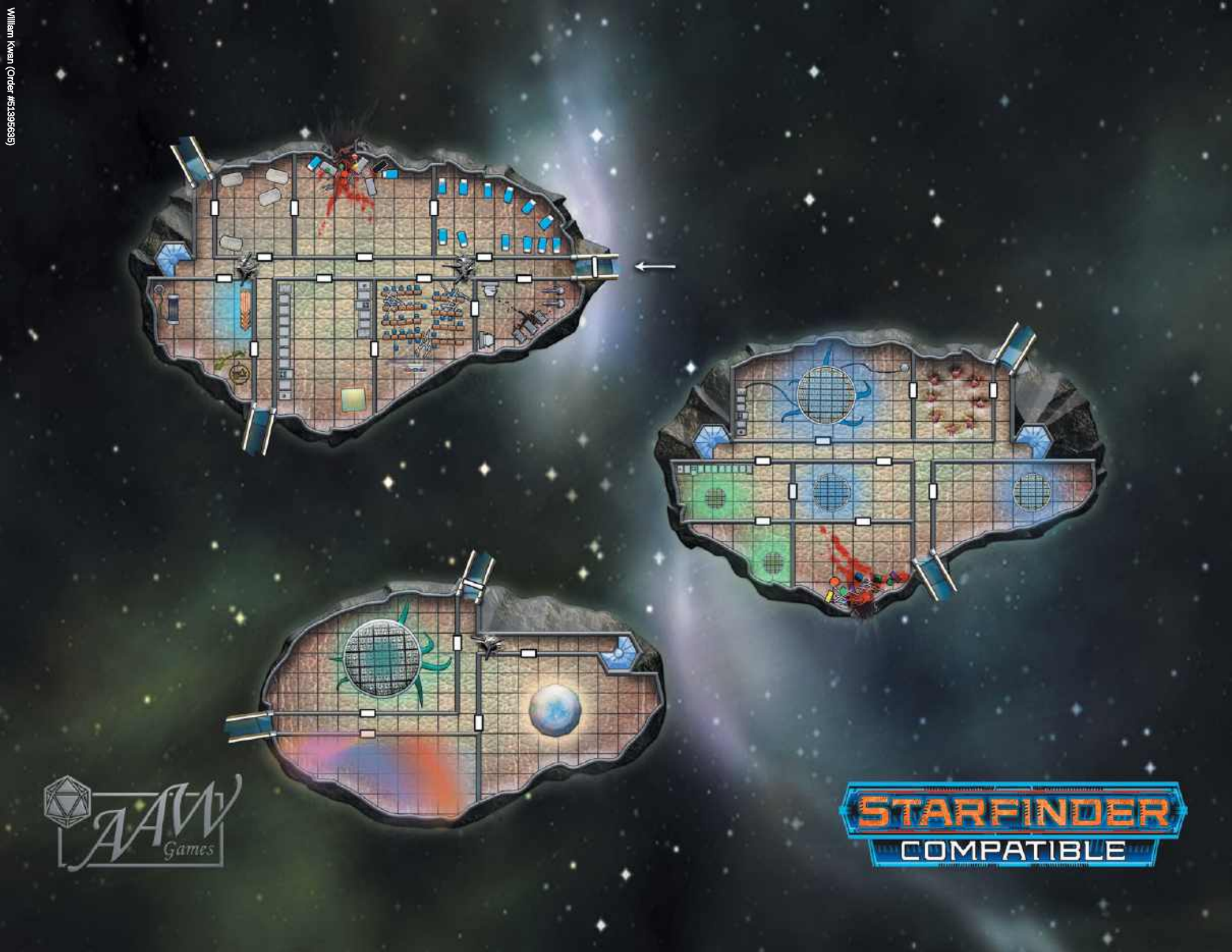

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This is not your first time at Edge Station.

You've already died here.

Abandoned by Central, infected with an intelligent plague, and told to spend the rest of your short life destroying a doomsday device, you've got a choice to make.

Edge Station still holds dark secrets, and should even a single druune travel back in time, the ramifications could be apocalyptic. Your destiny remains your own, whether you blindly follow orders or choose to seek the truth. Can you fight your way to the prototype time machine at Edge Station's center?

Paying Forward is part two in the five part *Future's Past* series for the *Starfinder Roleplaying Game*, and is meant to be played by 4-6 2nd-level PCs who should reach 3rd level or become warped, mind-controlled monsters by the adventure's conclusion!

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